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The Kaiser

AND OTHER POEMS

By
Leo Gregory

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Angelus Publishing Co.
Chicago, Ill.**

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and
Other Poems

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Leo Gregory

Angelus Publishing Co.
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Leo Gregory

*Into a tissue of remembered things,
He weaves the moonbeams and the threads of mist;
And colors it with sweet imaginings,
Cloudy embroideries,—by sunset kissed:
He sees among the dew-drops on the ferns
The fleeting prototype of children's tears;
And in the music of the running, burns
The pent-up laughter of a thousand years:
Along the dear familiar paths, he knows
The sigh that marks the crossing of the way;
The dreams that haunt the petals of the rose;
And all the wonders of a quiet day:
So glide away the years of minstrelsy,—
The magic of his boundless fantasy!*

H. H.

The Kaiser

Hail to the Kaiser, virile captain king!
Red-blooded men admire; imperial mien;
In mind, in heart, physique, developed roundly;
Spouse, wife must love, intuiting him true;
A sire of sons and daughter who feel proud
To call him father,—worship next to God;
A king regarding sceptre instrument
Of Providence to succor fellowmen;
Self-confident; and fully trusting them
Who call him Kaiser.

Conscious, peace the norm
Of life, the atmosphere of progress, long
His hand restrained in leach the dogs of war.
With parent divination, he prepared
His children to defend the home they love.
Not his intention to encourage war:—
Ambition was to make them perfect men
And women. And he did. In science, art
And literature, the envy of the world.

The German, from the marrow, democrat,
Whom subtle Greeks with nicety defined
The people's highest concept of a man;
Most independent of the sons of earth;
Accepts no truth, untried by reason: God
Himself he would not own, nor would obey,
Did not conviction tell him bow his head.
You cannot herd the German, nor stampede;
He follows blindly no king, how much loved.
To him the state is only means to end:—
The end, the weal of individual men.

This core-deep independence, unrestrained,
For centuries divided Teuton strength.
Von Bismarck sired United Germany!
Yet great as Chancellor, sublime his work,
The youthful Kaiser's genius, greater still:
The former's task, to make the Germans one;
The Kaiser planned to make his people great.

Accomplishment, surpassing William's dream!
Germanic culture hath produced a man
Whose like admiring world had never seen:—
The German spirit,—latest, rarest gem
Queen Nature, in most royal mood, bestowed:—
When deftly faceted, like Kohinoor,
World will acclaim intrinsic greater worth.

In one detail alone, the Kaiser erred:—
He failed to fully utilize the press,
That molds the public conscience of the world.
His wily foes aimed first to mask the crime
Premeditated in the mien of right.
For years, they libelled him embodiment
Of force, a despot driving slaves, a czar
Who fancied his caprice the will of God.
Effect: the world imagines Kaiser mad!
America, desirous to be fair,—
Her citizens from every clime on earth,—
Deems Kaiser half insane with lust of power,
Paretic planning conquest of the globe!

The British envy William The Superb!

They are themselves of royal stock. The proof,
The empire they have built. Since lordly Rome,
No other race hath wrought such miracle:—
Excelling even Caesars in the art
Of ruling men. Excepting Erin's isle,
They rule their colonies with wisdom; law
Is synonym of British sovereignty;
Where flag of England flies, men feel secure;
Four centuries, Britannia rules the sea;
King George today, earth's premier potentate.

In Lucifer, God's first, best work,—a rift:
In Adam, spirit breathed in slime,—was sin:
With virtues regal,—umbra,—gross defects:—
Insatiate greed of gold that steels the heart,
And assays manhood as it assays dirt:
The brazen geat of wealth and power,—pride;
Twin-littered luxury's finis, slaving drudgery;
Delusion, gold equivalent of men;
Mistake which Carthage made in war with Rome:—
In battle front, two thousand miles, how brief
A trench is held by sons of English soil:
Colonials are loyal?—Aye, but state
That must rely on alien blood, however leal,
Vicissitudes of time disintegrate.

This war is England's essay to destroy
The younger of two rivals, Germany.
Her dream,—when that fair realm hath ceased to be,—
To hurl a hemisphere against her foe
Historic,—ganjah-drugged with subtle art:—
Mistaking stupor for security:—
Narcotic senses hearing song of birds
In roar of war-planes, fancying school of dolphins,
Myriad hellish brood of submarines.

Attacked on every side, doth Kaiser quail?
Not he. Serene he sits upon his throne,
Bulwarked strongly by loyal German hearts.
That cause is just, his faith; prays help of God,
Trusts Teuton valor, training, brain and brawn.

God rules supreme. His providence in turn
Exalts each race;—assigns to each the role
Suggested by its genius, aim, and will, and work.

The Teuton David fights the British giant:
Combats lion threatening his fold.
As Saul, who envied that youth's prowess, sensed
In him successor to his crown and throne,
In hate once flashed a spear at David's heart:—
So Britain, envious of superior race,
By Heaven augured to play grander role,—
To crush her rival, leagueth half mankind.

The issue? History will repeat itself.
Victoria's Jubilee was highest peak
Of England's glory. Since that hour, decline.
The crown of Saul shall pass to Jesse's son.

Old Ocean, England's former, chief ally,
Now harbours Teuton terror, submarine!
The air is Zeppelin's; and from the skies
Germania surely threatens Britannia's doom.

The English lord, the last aristocrat,
Hath played his part, the hero of the past.
The German democrat advances. He
Plays leading role in future. World hath need
Of culture which could build that prince of men,
The modern German, human masterpiece,
Incarnate spirit of democracy!

Then hail to the Kaiser, manly leader of men;
Enthroned genius of the German race:—
Ideal of the age!—The Democrat!

LEO GREGORY

June 15, 1915.

Nina

Crude instruments, electric, tuned,
Though far as pole from pole apart,
Can flash each other messages:—
In tune, heart speaketh unto heart.

LEO GREGORY,
Elgin, Ill., 1913.

The Sheriff

It was Christmas Eve, and the wind blew cold,
And the snow was drifting high:
Not a ray of sun that long, sad day
Had brightened the leaden sky.

"The sheriff will soon be here, sweetheart,
And we must part with the team."
And the young farmer sat in the gathering gloom,
Like a man who was lost in a dream.

A knock at the door!—The sheriff strode in:—
"It is bitterly cold," he said.
"We've been expecting you all day long:—
The team is tied in the shed."

"I hate to take the horses away:—
I'm simply doing my duty."
Then he glanced at a laughing babe in the crib:—
"Well, isn't she a beauty!"

He picked up Margaret, the baby girl,
And dandled her on his knee:—
"Your golden curls and big blue eyes
Recall a sweet image to me."

He sat by the fire for half an hour,
Caressing and kissing the child;
And the baby danced and laughed in glee,
Till even the father smiled.

The sheriff stood up and put on his cap,
And buttoned his great fur coat:—
"I want to play Santa to baby tonight:—
Keep the team; and I'll settle the note."

LEO GREGORY,

Nov. 7, 1910.

Cleopatra

She prisms Egypt's glory: thousand kings
And queens,—heart, wit and beauty, render toll:
The lusty Nile's romances fire her soul;
The minstrelsy of the earth's primetide sings
In her sweet voice: about, on mystic wings
Flit nature's optic phantoms: billows roll
O'er wastes of sand: mirages promise goal
To home-sick pilgrim: desert darkness flings
Envenomed menaces: beside her throne,
That Hebrew spirit who gave man his law:
Attendant courtiers,—Letters, Science, Art;
The Sphynx and Cheopes,—man's pride in stone!
Her smile makes Antony deem sceptre, straw!
He throws away a world, to win her heart!

LEO GREGORY

Elgin, Ill., June 22, 1915.

War

All nature is at war. From spirit-rare
Prime matter of queen Ether,—in whose eyes,
The sunbeam flameth fire-brand: heat waves roll
Phosphor moulten argent billows of South Sea:
The lightning flash, an adder striking foe:—
Through all ascending hierarchies: from clod
To plant, to beast,—to earth's crown-jewel, man;
All creatures are at war. This side the realm
Of spirit, existence meaneth constant strife
Of elements discordant: nowhere peace
In all the vast circumference of time.
The end they seek is union with their kind:
To mate desire, these elements must fight
Their way through hosts inimical in long drawn
Battle. Merry throngs at Mardi Gras
Are suddenly transformed to frenzied mob,
At thoughtless cry of "Fire!" A man will rush
A fury, searching for his spouse; and she
Will scream hysteric, calling to her child:
The lover raves a maniac till he clasps
His promised bride. Even happy boy, and girl
In blushing teens, cry out for mother! Such
A struggle Science views in universe.
Each atom seeks its like: to compass which,
Long intervening conflict. From the morn
Of time till eve, is warfare. Trump of doom,—
Completion of the circle,—union,—peace!

The life of every human soul is war.
One pair in Eden sired all tribes of men:
Their offspring in essentials are alike;
In accidentals, differ. Biography
Of parents we can read in characters
Of children: ecstasy of honey-moon
In one; another, melancholy calm
Soft shadowing delirium of joy;
A son displays clear mind, strong will for work;
This nymph, abandon of a season's play;
Yon child betrays misfortune, sickness, grief;
This one, the smile of heaven,—health and hope;
Last, sympathy and poise of chastened years.

Mankind is only larger family:
Alike in all essentials of the human,
Differing as children, in detail.
The Greeks excelled in subtle intellect;
The Romans builded empire, codexed justice;
Jew and Celt see visions, speak with God;
Italia's sons, incarnate muses' choir;
The Sons of Clovis, flower of chivalry;
The Briton, peer of Pompey, ruling men;
The Nipponese, the new-birthed Orient!

God hath a plan: His aim, the greatest good
Of humankind. In every age, that race
Whose genius fits His purpose best,
He giveth leading part on stage of life.

Though man be god-like, he reveals the clay
Component in his framing; vice is twinned
With virtue, error masketh truth, and wrong
In garb of right deceiveth honest will.
His sin-dulled ear confoundeth demon's voice
With oracle divine. The best of men
Deem conscientious duty, to oppose
Each other. Hence are wars.

Yet God who made
Man, understands. The ancient seers who held
Converse with Him, ycleped Him "God of Hosts."
He is. God loveth warriors cordially.
He hovers calm as dove o'er battle field;
He heeds the vows of rival combatants;
And shadows loving benisons on both.
In spite of incidental, unintentioned
Ill effects, He sees them further plan
His love devised for their net betterment.

High-dowered intellects in every age
Have kenned this esoteric crypt of Providence:
The masses, even, sense it; for they smile
Assent when poet voices their dumb thought.

Not peace, but war, the norm of human life.
Weak souls imagine stagnancy is peace:
Their counterfeit is China's bane, a drug
Beclouding intellect, benumbing will.
We fear for man in coma: health is shamed
For yielding to allurements of soft down.

To superficial only, war is hell.
Hell is pit dug by paracidal Pride.
War is sublimest striving toward a goal:
Great heart's essay to realize ideal;
That what he deemeth justice may prevail.
Earth's annals clearly teach just war is good:
Not war for lust of carnage, conquest, hate,
Or envy, or revenge: but weal of state
Demands the sword repel unjust attack;
Avenge injustice done:—intention pure.
And prudent king will train his sons to war:
Defenselessness provoketh hostile thrust.

Whine not that war spells wounds, disease and death.
Friend, those things are not evils in themselves.
To soul, grace-dowered with faith and hope and love,
Death visions soaring pinions unto peace.
And they who weeping pray at soldier's grave,
Rise better men and women. Now they know
With surer faith than argument can give,
There is a better world: marconigrams
From spirit world assure them all is well.

Disease and suffering in wake of war?
Pain evil? No! It may be ecstasy!
A Lawrence bade them turn him on the grill,
That he might feel new tortures!

Look ye there!

The angel of the battlefield, a Nun,
Or Nightingale! To fuse a gem so pure,
Ask soldier, doth he reck his wounds high price!
And look ye here! A soldier's widow writhes
In agony of parturition! Doth she quail
At pain? She feels, but bears.—An infant's cry!—
Behold the martyr's rapture in her face!
The myrtle and the balsam in pain's tears!

So state that suffers agonies of war,
Forgeteth soon war's ills concomitant,
In joy of liberty new-born to her;
Or tyranny deposed from power; or throne
That envious rivals threatened, made secure;
Rebellious sons whipped into loyalty.

Like hurricane, war cleareth atmosphere,
Restoreth balance of the elements.
Successful war rejuvenates a race;
Arouses faculties to highest pitch
Of action. War correctly summed, is good.

This vastest, most destructive of all wars,
Presages dawn of golden age, whose like
The world hath never known. Before we die,
We men of middle age shall wondering view
A world regenerate beyond our hopes.

This war shall relegate aristocrat
To minor role. The democrat shall rule,
Speak nobler lines than rival ever dreamed;
The democrat, with nature's mind and heart;—
All humans his dear brothers, sisters,—wear
They crown, or humbly till they fertile field.

By nature, man is social, not isolate.
Men must unite for individual weal.
Best form of government, a native growth,
Not foreign frame, in theory more perfect.
State must have a head: the title borne
By him who rules, a mere detail. Heed not
The name: the substance view: or president,
Or king, or czar,—what matter?—But we must
Obey executive enforcing law:
For law is essenced wisdom of good men.

Sincerest democrat on earth is one
Who loveth title, Emperor: yet he,—
Imperial majesty personified,—
Is democrat from sole to tip of plume
That graces helmet; democrat from pith
Of manly heart to fingers toying sword:—
A simple human brother: all men kin:—
The savant, or lone fisherman at sea.
No huntsman on the hills, or orphaned waif,
But feels caressing sympathy of king.

When this world-war is done, shall we forget
That triumph of democracy was won
By emperor? Deluded demagogue,
Regarding trifles, blind to substances,
May seek divorce twixt king and commons. Strike
Him dead! The state must have a head. Mince not
About the title he may fancy,—king
Or emperor,—the merest bagatelle!
Ask this one question: Is he democrat?

This war shall make man give his mother's sex
The right by nature hers: equality
In law. God made man male and female; one;
Each complement of other; man complete
In both;—imperfect otherwise. She is
His equal: God's design: her duties, those
Implied by different sex: to mother sons
And daughters; train them; make man home,
Where strain and stress of strife may be forgot,
His nerve be braced by tonic of her love.

Assuming human nature, Son of God
Did not disdain conception in a woman's womb,—
Though He dispensed with seed of human sire:—
Nine months he nestled there, drank from her heart
The blood He shed on cross, redeeming world:
Took flesh of her to host our hungry souls,—
Flesh glorified upon eternal throne!

From woman's heart, He learned to know and love
The human,—new experience to God!
Beholding crib of Bethlehem, man comprehends
The seer: "A child shall lead them." Yea, Christ-child
Leads woman to her throne beside the king's.

LEO GREGORY,
Elgin, Ill., June 30, 1915

My Mother

I am a man, and proud of sex; yet one
Who gave me birth, and suckled me, and taught
Me truth and virtue, was a woman: naught
That I take pride in, or men praise, were done,
Had not a mother trained me, bade me shun
The path of sin. It was a woman brought
Me to the pinnacle on which I wrought
My masterpiece. A woman's love begun
Vibrations that now shine as truth to light
The world, and flame in love for human kind;
Inspiring now, a woman's love,—none other:—
It spurs my soul to dare sublimest height:
When painting perfect beauty, still I find
My fancy limns a vision of my mother.

LEO GREGORY,

Elgin, Ill., June 22. 1915.

Translation of Ode 1, Book 1, Horace

Maecenas, worthy son of noble sires,
At once my patron and dear friend, it fires
The blood of youth, Olympic dust to raise,
And rein the dashing steeds, 'mid shouts of praise,
To shun the goal with flashing chariot wheels,
And fly the dust that hindermost conceals.
Such men, a wreath of ivy-leaves will turn
To Gods, and cause their swelling hearts to burn
With godlike emulation. Men there are,
If fickle Roman favor stretch so far
That unto triple honors, they may rise,
Would walk most truly great in their own eyes.
Another is rejoiced, if he can store
The golden grain from Lybia's threshing floor.
The happy swain, content to till the farm
His father tilled, who loves the simple charm
Of quiet country life, could not be moved
For regal wealth to leave his home beloved,
And with a fearful heart, to tempt the deep,
Within whose caves so many victims sleep.
When round his bark, the winds and waters wage
Ominous war with elemental rage,
The merchant, homeward bound with precious freight,
Doth dread capricious and all-ruling fate;
And praises much the quiet and retreat
He hopes to find in his far country seat:
Yet poverty untutored to sustain,
He rigs his shattered barks for sea again.
With good old massic, sparkling in the bowl,
Another man delights his genial soul:
His early revels often are begun
Ere half his course, fleet Phoebus yet hath run.
Now by some sacred fountain, is he laid,
Now stretched beneath the green arbutus shade.
For some the tented field, the life in camp,
The wild forade, the legion's heavy tramp,
Abrupt command, the thrilling trumpet blast,
The battle cry, the war steed charging past,

The deadly onset and the clash of arms,
Have for their martial spirit sterner charms.
Diana's votary, the chill night through,
Will oft remain beneath the falling dew,
Unmindful of his patient, loving spouse,
Should but his dogs a timorous hind arouse,
Or Marsian boar, that, crashing through the toils,
Escapes the net, and every effort foils.
Such pleasures I have never known; rather,
I love the shady groves, and low sweet tune
Of dancing nymphs and satyrs in fair June.
My joy is full, if but Euterpe will
To lend me flute, and Polyphemia still
Refuses not to strike the Lesbian lyre,
And fill my soul with her poetic fire.
If on my brow you place the lyric bays,
I feel a God!—so proud of that high praise.

LEO GREGORY.

St. Viateur's College, Kankakee, Ill., 1882.

Uncle Henry

"Uncle Henry," cried little Violet,

"Come, look at my Christmas tree!—

Why do you come here on Christmas?

Have you no baby like me?

"My papa says you're a General,

Famous in every land;

And why you should be unhappy,

He cannot understand."

"I once had a home like this, my dear,—

I once had a Violet, too;

'And we always had a Christmas tree,—

And my darling looked like you.

"My Violet and her mamma died

A great many years ago:—

Uncle Henry has had no home since then,

And Christmas means only snow.

"That's why I come here on Christmas,

When there are no battles to fight;—

Your kiss and caress bring back happy days!—

That's why I came here tonight.

"In all the battles I fought these years,

I saw the same foe everywhere:—

I was fighting the demon oppressing my soul,

I was fighting the demon Despair!

"I was only a captain then, sweetheart,

I am head of the army, now;

And the world believes I value

The laurels on my brow.

"My dear little, sweet little angel!

I have rank and fame, 'tis true;

But tonight I would cheerfully part with them both,

For the baby who looked like you."

LEO GREGORY,

July 1, 1910.

First Meeting of Anacoana and Caonabo

Xaragua's king, a sleepless night had passed,
His mind a prey to fears. The hurricane
Had wrought great havoc over all the land;
His city was in ruins; royal palms
By scores lay prostrate, or had lost their crowns;
The dawn would mean renewal of the strife.
The princess, Anacoana, sought to cheer
Her parent, bade him seek the cool land breeze
Upon the shore. Her countenance was grave
Beyond its wont; yet from her fingers flowed
Electric waves of courage to his heart.
"What is it, daughter, well-beloved, that makes
Thy hand so potent? I can feel my heart
Expand with youthful strength! What hast thou seen?"

"In my short slumber, following storm, I dreamt
This morn to meet a king in very deed
Who will be king forever unto me:—
I saw him on this shore!—Behold my King!"

Bahama looked what way her glorious eyes
Stared raptured! On the shore beheld he band
Of Caribs! Trembling, frightened at the thought
Of danger to his daughter, he had turned
And hastened back. Restraining him, she said:
"Good sire, fear not. That noble Carib chief
Is royal soul I saw this night in dream!
Spare him, and those his warriors. They will turn
The tide of battle in thy favor. See
How bravely face they fate, that little band!
Their war-canoe a wreck upon the bar,
They look for death on this far shore, yet give
No sign of fear, all firm resolved to die,
If Tuyra will, though fall not unavenged.
Spare them, I pray! Let us advance, and bid
Them welcome. They are brave, and though we two
Are unaccompanied by warriors,
No harm they mean us."

And the prudent king,
At first though loath to trust the dreaded race,
His daughter's words, and looks, and fearlessness,
Gave courage to him: "Come, I deem it wise
As merciful."

The two walked slowly on.

The Carib Chieftain and his men, amazed
At such display of coolness, and of trust
In them: "Behold!" The Carib Chief exclaimed:—
"The King, and Anacoana, 'Golden Flower'!
They surely must be royal! No base-born
Dare trust their life to me as they two trust!
Behold the sun new rising on the hills!
More glorious far than his, that woman's face!
Methought this sun-rise had but signalled death
To all of us. Canoe a wreck, so few
Against a myriad, what end else presage?
But now I know it shall not be. Behold
The Princess, Tuyra showed in dream to me!
I scarce can credit sense of sight! And yet
Of certainty I know she will be queen
To me! This angel in the flesh! This flower
Of gold, as Haitians call her, loving her,
This poet, minstrel, fairest maid the world
Has e'er produced, Bahama's latest born!
Oh Tuyra! Is it true? Or do I dream?
Great Tuyra! Grant it may be true, or grant
That I shall never wake from this sweet dream!
She prays her royal sire to spare our life!
I read it in her face,—her eyes,—such eyes!
The brown eyes of the Haitians,—but the fire!
All other eyes I ever saw, lack life!
Her eyes, expressive of her every thought!
Her queenly form! Her face, in every line
Perfection! But those eyes! The eyes I saw
In vision e'er I sailed! Fair maids I knew
In Bouriquin,—and loved, as men will do;
Yet never could I fix my heart on them.
They call me fickle 'Tis not true,— I could
Not find in them a soul so great as I
Desired in her who some day should beget
My Higuanota,—'child of perfect love'!
The King would speak with us. Throw down your spears!"

Bahama, aged sovereign of Xaragua,
Spake these words; "Brave men, we welcome ye!
'Twas fortunate ye landed on our shores.
We know your race, yet harbor nought of ill
Against the victims of the hurricane.
We scorn to take advantage of a foe
Mischance has wrecked upon Xaragua's coast.
Misfortune makes ye friends. We welcome ye.
Abide with us; our land is rich and wide,
If ye would make our realm your home and choose
Ye wives among Xaragua's daughters,—they
Are fairest in all Haiti,—choose ye wives,
Select ye fields, make this your future home."

Great Caonabo thus: "We came, 'tis true,
With hostile purpose, as Caribs always do;
But Tuyra willeth otherwise. We will
Abide with ye, make this our home and choose
Us wives among your race. 'Tis Tuyra's will."

LEO GREGORY,

Dec. 20, 1913.

Hotel Montagne, Port au Prince, Haiti.

Anacraana

*(Caonabo's Last Vision of Home Before His Death at Sea, A Prisoner on Board
a Spanish Caravel)*

Her smile, inspiration; her kiss is a vision of bliss!
Not blinding, her beauty; attracting, refreshing, refining,
Uplifting,—entrancing!—love's coy invitation to Eden.
Her ministry, soothing as first born's tiny fingers
On her first naked bosom;—thistle down alighting
Upon waters; rose leaves falling upon velvet.

Some loves exhaust, depress, becloud, enfeeble;
Her love, stimulant as vintage of the Rhine!
Her love in flash transforming nectar given
Into force dynamic, infunding voltage
Meted only by the strength of heart-walls.

Cell, cell-speared, soul-quickened, wraps she in love;
Her breast atelier,—God and she co-labor
Slowly, nine moons—deftly, sweetly fashion
Nature's image in Creation's Spring;
The best in me, the best in her,—all I
Adore in her, all she adores in me,—
Her hopes, her dreams, ambitions, making real
The ideal,—building me a future,—makes
Me live anew,—Thank God! in Higuanota!

Nov. 4, 1913.

LEO GREGORY,
Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Ill.

Lèogane

The loveliest vale in this fair isle,
My heart's first choice, is Lèogane;
'Twas here, the home of the royal palm,
The dearest life to me, began.

Bahama's latest, best loved child,
Anacoana, "Golden Flower,"
Nature's minstrel, Queen of Song,
Was born in Nature's favorite bower.

What time thy pure lips first drew breath,
The nightingale sang sweeter song;
The Southern Cross more brilliant glowed;
The East Winds crooned as they glided along

From the hills to the ocean, on thy birth morn;
More delicate blue wore the waves of the sea;
And proud palms lowered their royal crowns,
Angelic soul, in greeting to thee.

Here first thy maiden eyes beheld,
In victim of a tropic storm,
The man who measured up a king
In every line of face and form.

The proudest sons of grand old Spain,—
Columbus, first of Italy's great:—
Felt honored here to be thy guests,
Participant in royal fete.

Here, envy of that greater man,
Unfounded fear of treachery,
Made base Ovando damn his soul,
In turning feast to tragedy!

Crude instruments electric, tuned,
Though far as pole from pole, apart,
Can flash each other messages:—
In tune, heart speaketh unto heart.

The human soul, God's last, best work,
Such fineness hath,—so sensitive!—
Nor space, nor death, can intervene,
Relationship preventative.

No idle fancy then to feel
The influence of thy presence here:—
I walk a king, for that a queen
Smiles benison, to my heart's cheer.

'Neath mourning palms of The Chateau,
The holiest spot on earth to me,
My wish, at last, the lonely grave
Of this most lonely heart to be

LEO GREGORY,

Dec. 26, 1913.

Hotel Montagne, Port au Prince, Haiti.

Haiti

Fair Haiti! A caed mille faelthe this morning to thee!
Full oft in youth my fervent prayer had been
To visit this eden, romance and history made scene
Of Anacoana's triumphs,—and tragedy!
Whose beauty ravished Colon's heart to ecstasy.
Not strange the Antilles willing call thee Queen;
And Ocean, acquainted with many, enamoured, I ween,
Of superlative charm, calls thee Pearl of The Sea!
Yet find I picture fancy limned, surpassed!
The heart of the Cid, the Troubadour's tongue, the Nile
Queen's blood and beauty, in Haiti's children seen!
But generous Heaven's greatest gift, this last,—
The mortal dust,—immortal dust!—Loved isle,—
Of Colon, Anacoana, Desselinnés!

Dec. '28, 1913.

LEO GREGORY,
Hotel Montagne, Port au Prince, Haiti.

NOTE—"Caed mille faelthe" is an Irish expression which means "A hundred thousand greetings." Colon, Spanish for Columbus. L. G.

Mother's Prayer

I.

"The day is waning, mother dear,
The night is stealing on;
Come, talk into this graphophone,
Before the light is gone."

II.

"What shall I say?" — "Oh, anything!"
"I cannot, dear," — "I do beseech!"
"The chill of earth is in my blood;
Age hath not ready speech."

III.

"Then sing some old-time lullaby,
You used to sing to me;—
Or say some prayer,—you always pray."
"I'll say a prayer for thee."

IV.

Forgetful of the instrument,
She voiced a fervent prayer,
And spake her heart's petition
As if her Lord were there.

V.

She prayed for parents,—like a child;—
She prayed for "father," dead;
She prayed for "sister" and her babe;—
Then, bowing low her head,

VI.

She prayed for me, her wayward son:—
"God bless my darling boy!—
Bless him, the flower of my old age,—
My latest grief,—and joy!"

VII.

Emotion flushed her pale, sweet face,
As sunset crimsons snow,
When graven roll repeated true
Her voice, so soft and low.

VIII.

The lips that spake that prayer are mute,
Her heart has ceased to thrill,
But Menlo wizard's art preserves
Her living accents still.

IX.

Were I to lose all I possess,
I'd smile without a care,—
Could I but keep the precious roll
That voices mother's prayer.

LEO GREGORY.

The German Air-Man

A hundred bird-men had flown to Chavannes;
For Pegoud was dead,—The King of The Air!
Killed in a duel above the clouds:—
“May his soul rest in peace!”—his comrades’ prayer.

Chanted the plaintive Mass of The Dead;
Sweetly the Benedictus was said;
Tearful the Absolution was read;
“Have mercy, Lord!” the Curè plead.

A shot! A shout! And every one starts!
The roar of a war-plane! “A German!” “En haut!”
Ten air-men rush to their planes, and mount
To punish the heartless or hare-mad foe!

The enemy comes with the speed of the wind;
Then circles, and drops what seemeth grenade;
“How wantonly cruel! On such a day!
Of what is the heart of a German made?”

“It does not explode!—Pray what can it be?”
They carefully open the packet,—and lo!
A wreath of immortelles,—and billet:—
“To the noble dead, from his German foe.”

LEO GREGORY,
Elgin, Ill., September 22, 1915.

Ruth and Erin

Prologue.

Dear children of Erin and Ruth! Ye ask me to sing
Ye a song. I'll do it. I'll sing to the strains of the harp,
The instrument dear to the exiles of Erin and Juda.—

A bit of a secret:—Come Lady's Day, six years ago, in
Ratana,

I stood on the spot where my dear Irish mother,—God
rest her!—

Was born! Some cousins were with me. How I wished
they were not!

I was dying to throw myself down and kiss the dear sod!—
I didn't! Ashamed I was; thinking the cousins might
laugh.—

God help us! The best inspirations of grace often fail,
Because human respect, pride, or vanity weakens our will!

It was there the day, I found this ancient harp,
In the Fairy Circle, the spring of a hound from the stile.
It was made by a Cherub for Jubal, in springtime of the
earth;

King David twanged it when prophets chorused the psalms;
It was gift of the fairies to Dubtach at Tara, what time
He was christened by Patrick. Both prophet and bard
Were cousins of mine; so I claimed their harp as my own.—
And listen!—The spirit inspiring the Hebrew and Celt,
In the ancient days, every now and then whispers to me!

This old harp, as ye see, looks the worse for the wear,—
in the frame:

But the strings!—Each a spirit of music from God's harp
that wings

To my own, and gives to my human song heavenly tone,
Faint echo of anthems of cherubin round the White Throne!

Ye put me the query: Why is it that God Who is just,
Seems to shower His best gifts on other races of men,
Much younger than our royal lines, and less noble?"
I'll tell ye;—or rather the spirits of music, the strings
Of this harp, will answer in song that will gladden your
hearts!

Song of the Harp

Two daughters of the Orient: elder, Ruth:—
Black eyes: for sunny climes know deepest shades;
Her velvet skin, subdued October gold;
Her soul as pure as the diamonds that shone in her crown.
Young Erin's eyes were blue; for she was born
On voyage to Inis-Fail, Island of Destiny:
The depth of the ocean, sapphire blue of the skies,
A fire-opal spirit,—her beautiful Irish eyes.
Her cheek, pink of sea shell, translucent milk of the pearl.

Both sisters were crowned with tresses, luxuriant, black:
Ruth's writhing with passion subdued of her virtuous soul;
Erin's, undulant tresses of mermaids disporting in sea.

Sweet Ruth found a mate in Judea, and ever abode
In the land that had given her birth.

Her father had seen
A vision of future glory in the West
For child to be born, a daughter;—heard a voice
Which bade him take his spouse, fecund of love,
And follow in galley the course of the setting sun,
To an island the fairies made half and half Eden and
heaven.

Ruth lived happy with spouse, now king in place of her
sire:
Royal blood of two rivers, the consort of a king,
She was queenly in beauty and culture, in speech and in
mien,
As Sara, her ancestral mother, Gerara's king,
In a nation of beautiful women, thought most fair.

When Erin was born in sight of the headland of Bray,
Quean Mab, whom God had sent to accouchement, gave sign
To Oberon, Fairyland's King That night, to win
From Titania, reluctant, sweet favor, he whispered the
news.

The mother instinct made her generous:
She sent an emerald pendant, birthstone of May;
She prayed him bid Triton sound Conch to smoothen the
sea;

Prayed him summon the Sylphs, Elves, Orends and Trolls,
The Nixies, Niads, Bannees, Undines and Merrows.
They all came rejoicing in chorus to welcome their queen!
Father Ocean, royal in blue, ermined with foam;
The Mountains in silken sheen, and crowned with oak-
leaves;
On Valleys, rich robes of green velvet, gaily flowered
With poppies, that flashed like red Mars in the soul of the
Celt.

Ruth's children were ever the favorites of Yahweh:—
Faith gave to their minds added vision that pierced through
the veil
Of the mundane, and dimly saw angel hosts ranked before
God!
That vision has left an impression on souls of her off-
spring
Which never has faded. It makes them superior to fortune.
Prosperity genders not pride, only makes them more grate-
ful,—

Knowing the Author. Adversity cannot obscure
That vision supernal, they know to be future home.

God focused Egypt's lore in the Waif of The Nile;
Inspiring him write the creation story for men:
Evolution through uncounted eons of time
Of elements cosmic, obeying Creator's law,
Develop rhythmically into universe;
Astonished, he saw God breathe into matter, life;—
Ascending choirs of flowers, and birds and beasts;
He saw Creator smile when He made man;
Saw woman blossom, flower of Adam's love,
The crowning glory of the universe!

King David voiced full gamut of man's faith,
And hope and love; his son, King Solomon,
Hath epigrammed all wisdom in his words.

Ruth's fairest daughter, Mary, virgined Christ,
The God-man, summit of humanity!
As all eyes in Campagna turn to dome
Of Peter's Temple,—turn, and turn again:
As Colon's crews on first famed voyage, stared
At flaming Teneriffe—in hope,—in fear,—
Uncertain whether augury, or portent;

As emigrants to Golden Gate, admiring
 Pause at foot of Colorado's Peak:—
 So Christ compels the gaze of all mankind;
 The cynosure of ancient faith and hope;
 To later cycles, Cross of Southern Seas.
 A frequent occurrence, child mis-understood
 And rejected, proves best of the brood and the pride of
 his blood:—
 Cast off by his own, as Joseph his forebear was,
 He loves them still, and blesses from afar.
 They are his bone and blood. Some day, when they
 Kneel suppliant at His throne,—like prototype,
 Forgetful of their sin, His high estate,
 His human heart will open to embrace:—
 Despite of faults, the premier race of men.

Two thousand years, the noble sons of Ruth
 Are scattered o'er the earth: no home: they live
 By tolerance contemptuous of inferior men;
 In Ghettos, persecuted, shorn of rights
 By nature due them:—dear to Yahweh still,
 Observant of His decalogue, they live;—
 Yea; leaven with their virtues every land.

As Ruth in Orient, so Erin was
 To western world the oracle of God.
 When Roman Patrick stood at Tara's throne,
 And limned the Christ, and echoed code He taught,
 The Celt intuited a brother, bent
 A ready knee in reverence. As a spark
 In harvest field of fertile Ratana
 Enkindles prairie fire as swift as wind;
 Or flint-spark of huntsman on Wicklow's forest-clad hills,
 Rolls in billows of flame that leap at the frightened skies:—
 So the grace of the Crucified blazed in the soul of the Celt!
 Five centuries, Scotia shone "Island of Savants and
 Saints";—
 Dark Ages, when locust hordes swarmed over Europe,
 Destroying the Empire of Rome,—Erin's sons were
 Life-sparks new kindling the mind and the heart of the race.

Erin's day of glory ended in black night.
Ten centuries of discord,—treachery;
And consequential servitude to race,
Whose sons and daughters once had served in halls
Of Irish Chieftains: wars and famines drained
Prolific mother of red-blooded men,
The like of Brian, breaking at a blow
The back of Danish giant on Clontarf:
Every hill and mountain wearing ruined crown
Of ancient glory,—castle, fort and abbey;
Millions martyred for the faith of Christ!—
Ten latest chapters writ in tears and blood!

Above the clouds, is sunshine; blackest night
Hath stars. What Rome was to the ancient world,
Britannia is today. As sons of Ruth
Made Roman Empire Christian, Erin's sons
Spread Patrick's faith wherever England's flag
Flies dominant in Empire girdling earth.
Where conquering Briton marches, shadows Celt;
For Erin's cross, God blesses England's crown.

Oh ye children of Ruth and of Erin, lamenting sad fate
Of your noble houses, know: prophet of blessing is pain.
Lest wealth and power, too long enjoyed, might gender
Pride and luxury, precursing death;
As He permitted Satan buffet Job,—
So, weeping, God consented, new world-lords
Rob Jew and Celt of pristine royal circumstance,
Himself preserving substance, royal hearts;
Gave faith and fancy wings to waft their souls,
When sorely tried, to realms of hoped-for love:
The spirit world as real to them as earth:
Where grosser, earthy natures suicide,
A Jew or Celt kneels down like child to pray,
Or takes his harp and sings his griefs away.

Good blood will show in horses, sire in son:
The child of Hebrew peasant counsels kings;
The bairn of humble Celt is Kitchener:—
In neither instance, miracle; the race-
Horse blood was there; occasion revealing the king!

The Lord has been good to ye! Glory was yours in the
past!—

The best things in life not denied to ye now!—

Your blood demands ye be royal unto the end!

Henceforth, sing peans! No more threnodies!—

Let these gallant young heroes,—American, Teuton, and
Jap,—

Unenvied by ye, take command in new battle of life!

The Father of nations wills it; and He knows best!

LEO GREGORY,

July 10, 1915.

St. Joseph's Academy, Adrian, Mich.

A Letter

The maid hands me a letter:
I start, and cease to sing:
She wonders why I tremble
At such a common thing.

She cannot have a sweetheart,
Or she would surely know
Why one of many letters
Could agitate me so.

LEO GREGORY,

1904.

Father Ryan Suspended

Father Ryan, the poet priest of the South,
Once lived in Tennessee;—
Well, here is a story told of him,
As an old man told it to me:

A Baptist congregation there,—
I cannot remember the place,—
Had engaged an exhorter to preach to them,
For they felt the need of grace.

When the day of the great revival came,
And hundreds from far and near,
Had pitched their camp in a shady grove,
The evangelist failed to appear.

To say they were disappointed that day,
Is using expression too mild;—
Then some one suggested the "Poet Priest":—
And that Baptist camp went wild.

They threw up their hats and clapped their hands:—
"We must get him to come if we can!"
A cripple in faded gray cried out,—
"By God, he is just the man!"

Father Ryan, you know, was Nature's child,
Like every true poet who sings:
But gauged by the measure of common men,
He was apt to do queer things.

He had won the heart of the chivalrous South,
By singing "The Sword of Lee";
His "Conquered Banner" had conquered the world,
By the breadth of its charity.

Just like him, he answered the Baptist call,
Without a moment's delay;
He only thought of the good he might do,—
Not what his Bishop might say.

But Bishops have rules; and all agree,
There must be discipline:
And priests are often forbidden to do
Many things that are not sin.

The Bishop admired the zeal of the priest;
He disapproved of his ways;
So he sent him a letter, which briefly read:—
“Suspended for forty days.”

A few weeks later, the Bishop received
A note from the Poet Priest:
“Dear Bishop: We pray you would deign to come
On our Blessed Lady’s Feast.”

When the Bishop drove up, the appointed day,
Imagine his surprise;
The village church was packed to the door,
And tears were in many eyes.

“What does this mean?” he sternly asked:
“What do you want me to do?”
“My camp-meeting folly,” the old priest said;
“They wait baptism, Bishop, from you.”

The Bishop stood up at the altar rail:—
“Dear friends, your pastor was right;
“Father Ryan will give you the sacrament,
And I’ll be his acolyte.”

LEO GREGORY,

1910.

The Human

The human, globe-round human, is my theme.
In vista, sixty centuries flash to mind!
Had sex or color, clan or faith confined
My sympathies, less noble would I deem
Myself and mission.—Human!—Ah! I seem
At once akin to greatest of mankind!
In all their grand achievements I can find
A reason to rejoice, and hopeful dream
My soul shall wing to peaks they could attain,—
Because I am a brother:—like them, seed
Of Adam. What my kindred could, I can!
Henceforth, I sing humanity:—the brain,
The heart, achievement! Under tribe and creed
And caste,—the human,—most sublime in man!

LEO GREGORY,

June 17, 1915.

Not Hypocrite, But Human

I have done wrong. Who has not done?—

But I have done some good;

And more of good than ill, I trust:—

I did the best I could.

I made a vow upon a time,—

In grace, my second birth,—

Each day to bring sunshine with me

To some dark spot on earth.

And I have tried to keep my word,

In gratitude to Heaven,

And ever shared with lowliest

What God to me had given.

The homes of culture and of wealth

Were open to my name;

Association with the great

Would make me share their fame.

If I shunned homes of happiness,

'Twas not from choice, be sure;

But that I felt my duty called

To sick and lowly poor.

There have been days, and not a few,

When it was hard to be

The messenger of hopefulness,

When I no star could see.

How could my breaking, bleeding heart

Bring unto others cheer?

How could I bid another love,

When I felt only fear?

It was my wont in those dark days

To watch the children play;

And catch a gleam from their bright eyes,

And hurry me away,

To sick, and poor, and sad of heart:—

They said I brought them light:—

'Twas but reflected glory, such

As diamonds give at night.

And I perforce must leave again,
 Before they guessed the whole,—
Before the borrowed light they saw,
 Had faded from my soul.

And going home, my weary feet
 I feared were failing me:
And I have cried: "Oh, why, My God,
 Hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Why is it that a generous soul
 Who sings a high ideal,
Is called a hypocrite by those
 Who only see the real?

To cherish high ideal, means
 High striving of the soul,—
A noble act, which God accounts
 An effort for the goal.

Men only crown the victor's brow;
 But God, who knows the will,
May count the vanquished in the fight
 A greater hero still.

Was good I did the less sincere,
 Because I failed in part?
Not hypocrite, but human, friend,
 Describes an erring heart.

LEO GREGORY,

1902.

Catherine

A beautiful actress, years ago,
 Excelled in the role of a queen;
And the royal traits of the character played,
 In a grand-child now are seen.

For the images sketched by the intellect,
 And approved by the heart with its seal,
Will some day become realities:—
 The ideal createth the real.

A wealth of the loveliest auburn hair,
 Caressing her forehead in curls;—
Her cheek has the pink and the white of wild rose;
 Her teeth are a string of pearls.

Her brown eyes flash bright as the lightning at night,
 Under lashes, languishing, dark:—
Her lips are the gates of the morning;
 Her laugh is the song of the lark.

She's the prettiest girl in the convent,
 The cleverest pupil in class;
A rollicking imp on the play ground,
 A seraph, during Mass.

As graceful and lithe as a young gazelle;
 As free as an eagle on wing;
As ready to smile and as ready to weep,
 As an Irish sky in spring.

But her chiefest charms are hidden from sight,
 Eluding the pencil of art:
What wins her the love of all who know,
 Is the genuine ring of her heart.

A secret why she loves Uncle John.—
 Why that sudden gloom in her eyes:—
They were wove in the woof of her soul before birth,
 By the angels in Paradise.

The love and the sympathy felt for him,
By her parents, that sad year,
And the gloom of his spirit o'ershadowing them,
In the child then born appear.

So he calls her the child of his sorrow,
And loves her as if his own:
And she loves him, and feels his gloom;—
The reason to her, unknown.

Dear little sweetheart, Catherine!—
How we miss her, now she is gone!—
She was sunshine and flower and song of birds,
In the home of her Uncle John.

July 2, 1910.

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